

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I'm writing to urge you to support the proposed merger between Hughes Electronics and EchoStar Communications. I believe the merger holds tremendous potential for my company in Colville, WA which sells the DIRECTV satellite TV service. The new company will offer a more attractive product to consumers, and this will mean more business for my company.

The majority of my customers are not able to subscribe to their local broadcast channels via satellite. This is the case because DIRECTV does not have sufficient spectrum to provide all local channels in every one of the country's 210 local television markets. Currently, DIRECTV offers local broadcast channels in only 43 markets. The merger will allow the combined company to reclaim the spectrum currently used for the duplicate broadcasting of approximately 500 identical TV channels. This will increase capacity and allow the new company to serve all television markets in the U.S. This will allow me to offer my customers a more competitive alternative to cable in the near future.

None of my customers currently have broadband access to the Internet via cable modem or DSL service, but it is clearly something that many of them want given the number of times I have heard them ask about it. If the merger is approved, the new company will be able to provide the homes and businesses in my area affordable high-speed Internet access service. My customers will benefit from this merger because HUGHES and EchoStar can combine their resources, satellites, and spectrum to provide high-speed satellite Internet access service to areas not otherwise served by cable modem service or DSL.

Whether or not my customers have access to cable, and most do not, all of them will benefit from the new company's ability to better compete with cable. The new company has pledged to offer nationwide prices and services -- bringing the benefits of vigorous competition with cable -- to customers everywhere.

Since its inception, direct broadcast satellite TV providers have offered uniform, nationwide pricing structures, and the new company has guaranteed that it will continue this practice. Nationwide pricing offers customers in rural America the full benefits of the rigorous competition occurring in urban and suburban areas. I can rest assured that satellite TV will remain a competitively priced product.

The EchoStar-HUGHES merger will allow the new company to offer a stronger satellite TV product nationwide, providing local broadcast channels in every television market, and new and enhanced television services such as HDTV, interactive TV, and more. In addition, the new company will be able to offer an affordable, high-speed Internet product to every zip code in the country. As a

retailer for DIRECTV, I will benefit from increased sales. For all of these reasons, I urge you to support the EchoStar-HUGHES merger.

Sincerely,

jeff mauer
132 Ponderosa Road
Colville, WA 99114